

Brring, Brring... Hello? Who?

Yes, this is she.... What?

Who did you say you were again?

Really?

Oh.....

Send it to me in writing and I'll think about it.

Wait...you already sent written information?

Oh... yes...I think I know where I put it.

Yes, I will be sure to read it and respond.

You're welcome.

Goodbye.

Click.

No – it wasn't a charity asking for donations

Or a computer hack wanting to fix my viruses

Or a political candidate wanting my support.

It wasGod.

Okay, so it wasn't a phone call, and it was over 40 years ago,

But it was still God calling...

Calling me through the words of the Bible,
the voices of pastors and Sunday School teachers,
camp counselors and youth leaders.
Calling me to serve Christ's church as a pastor.

Others have heard God's call to serve as

- teachers, evangelists,
- prophets, healers,
- deacons, administrators,
- musicians and benefactors.

And each vocation is a call to speak God's word.

In fact, each of us who has been baptized has been called to speak God's Word in some way.

Like the boy Samuel, *what* God calls people to speak is not always easy on the ears or simple to interpret.

It is not like dipping out ice cream or reading a brag sheet.

Everybody wants those things

– everybody likes to hear good things said about themselves.

But God's Word is not always a soft, gentle, easy word.

Sometimes it is hard – even damning,

as was the word Samuel was told to speak to Eli.

God's Word is not always gentle, but **it is always the truth...**

and the truth leads to life...however long and difficult the journey may be.

...

It is amazing how often God calls children and young people to be the ones to speak his truth and serve his purpose.

Samuel, David, Joseph,

Josiah the 8 yr. old king,

Mary, and Jesus.

When Jesus was confronted by the religious authorities, it was reminiscent of the encounter he had with them about 18 years prior, when he was 12.

Then, he had been seen as a precocious boy who amazed the rabbis, but who ---still – was just a boy. No threat to them.

Now, however, he was a peer – and his words and actions were speaking the truth to their power and they did not like it!

He wasn't cute anymore – he was threatening their sense of security, misplaced as it was.

They found their security in keeping the rules of the Law, believing that the commandments were the measure of righteousness and the basis of sharing in the rewards of heaven.

I confess, I have fallen into that trap of thinking, too.

Because its easier to keep rules than to live by principles, Right?

It's easier to not murder – check,

not steal – check,

not lie, check

than to Love God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves.

- We can be smug about not killing that annoying person,
- But are we so confident about loving that one?

We need people who exercise their call to speak God's Word to us, recalling us to our purpose and mission

- as those whom God has called to speak his Word,
- to live his love,
- and to be Christ's presence in this world.

Like Samuel, God calls us out of bed,

off the couch, and out of the pew to tell the story of Jesus:

- The Lord who makes the lame whole
- And who feeds the hungry
- Who restores life with grace –

We need the Sabbath rest. Our employees need the Sabbath rest;

Because in that rest, God restores us to life

Through worship

The Word

Holy Communion

Prayer

And the blessed fellowship of other Christians

And in that Sabbath rest, **Jesus refocuses us on our calling** to be the living and breathing messengers of God in word and deed.

- The Sabbath is not just a rule to keep
- Nor is it just a day off to do as we please

It is the Lord's day to refresh us in our very being as the people of God.

That is why Jesus gleaned wheat for his disciples and healed the man's hand

And why he spoke a word of truth to the people:

“What kind of action suits the Sabbath best? Doing good or doing evil? Helping people or leaving them helpless?”

He then proceeded to answer the question by restoring the man's hand – and his means of making a living.

Love is the principle by which God calls us to live.

Tough love, and compassionate love.

Truth-telling love and life-giving love.

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**When God calls, we respond with the Word he has given us
and the actions the Holy Spirit inspires through God's Word.**

But how do we know it is God calling?

The boy Samuel helps us with this.

1. Ask a mentor to help you clarify God's call.
2. Is the nudge to do something persistent?
3. Is the call you hear rooted in reality and consistent with what God has said and done before?

God's call can be bold and clear, like a request for particular action.

Or God's call can be subtle, soft, a gentle stirring that your particular gifts and resources are needed for God's mission.

God's call can be enduring, such as the call to *be* a child of God in body, mind, and spirit

Or it can be for a certain time and place – such as the call to help someone who has fallen down or to read the lessons on a Sunday morning.

Once thing is sure: By the Holy Spirit, God calls each person who is baptized.

God calls us to tell the story of a man who knows everything about us –the good, the bad, and the ugly -- and still died so that we could live.

The story of a God who came into our world as a baby named Jesus, Savior.

God calls us to experience the healing of our withered souls by the forgiveness of our sins

and to nourish our famished spirits with the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation Jesus gives us.

And then to tell the story of God's saving grace in our lives.

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Brring.....Brring....

It's God calling.... How will you respond?

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Something extra for you:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRDfaMfnVZM>

Pentecost 2B

3 June

St. Peter's

1 Samuel 3:1-20; Mark 2:23-3:6